

GAMES

FAQ

Q What's the difference between an analogue and a digital controller?

A An analogue controller has lots of different states, so there is finer control. For example, if you use a steering wheel in a driving game, a small touch of the wheel turns the car slightly. Analogue controllers, therefore, work well with games where you want to recreate real-world controls, such as flight sims and driving games.

A digital controller has just two states: on and off. So using a digital controller in a driving game means that you can only turn full right or full left. This is fine for platform games or for first-person shooters where you want to move forward or stop completely.

If you're serious about playing games, you should use digital and analogue controllers, depending on the type of game you're playing.

David Ludlow
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ACTIVISION The Movies

★★★★★
£25 inc VAT

The Movies is yet another tycoon game. This time, you're in control of a movie studio that you can use to build new sets and buildings, train movie stars and make movies, which make you money.

It starts very much like every other game of its ilk, with a set amount of cash and a brief tutorial that talks you through constructing the initial buildings you need to begin producing. From here, it's a matter of allocating resources, such as creating your stars and directors, but also making sure that you've got the crews to shoot the movie. Initially, the game gives you pre-written scripts, but as you progress you can build a script studio and have your writers work on the genres you give them. Once a film has moved through production and been released, it's scored on the quality of the script, acting, directing and sets. This score affects how much money you'll make from it.

To improve your ratings, you need to keep your staff happy by dealing with their pay, making sure they have enough time to relax, getting them to practise on unused sets and casting them in pictures of the same genre.

You have to cope with stars burning out and turning to drink, which adds a fresh element. At this level, there is a lot to deal with. It can get quite difficult at times, as it's hard to keep track of all your stars and work out what makes them happy. You also need to work on building relationships between them all, which involves grabbing stars and putting them next to each other so that they can get to know one another. It will often feel like a lot of manual work has to go into improving the quality of your



▲ Build sets, coach actors and make films in The Movies

output, rather than you being able to sit back and let your studio evolve. As time moves on and your studio grows, you get more complicated technology, so you can go from silent films to producing science fiction epics.

However, you also need to contend with your studio's perception by making it an attractive place to work, otherwise you won't attract new talent and you'll be stuck making *Ed Wood*-style films rather than Spielberg blockbusters.

While that could so easily have been it, The Movies has an extra dimension to it once you build your own script production building. From here, you can specify the genre of film, the sets used, the sequences to be shot, the set changes and even the wardrobe. This is like another game in itself, and it gets very involved.

You can even add your own dialogue, if you have a microphone, and choose the special effects you want to use in each scene.

There's lots to keep you occupied in The Movies, but keeping your stars happy is tricky, and growing the business is a bit harder than with other Tycoon games we've played.

David Ludlow

SUMMARY

- ✓ Make your own movies
- ✓ Lots going on
- ✗ Difficult to keep track of it all

TYCOON GAME Windows 98 SE or later, 800MHz processor, 256MB RAM, 2.4GB disk space **PRODUCT CODE** 32587.202.UK
SUPPLIER www.dvd.co.uk
DETAILS www.activision.com

Top 5 games

1. Civilization IV

£18 inc VAT ★★★★★



Play as God as you build a futuristic city from nothing. Plenty of warfare mixed with town planning and building means there's lots on offer for all types of game players.

SUPPLIER www.play.com **DETAILS** www.2kgames.com **FULL REVIEW** January 2006



2. Black & White 2

£25 inc VAT ★★★★★



Nurture or torture your followers by playing a loving god or a feared deity. Loving visuals and paths of peace or violence make this game a sure-fire winner.

SUPPLIER www.cd-wow.com **DETAILS** www.eagames.com **FULL REVIEW** February 2006



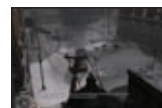
3. Call of Duty 2

£18 inc VAT ★★★★★



Outstanding WWII game where you play as a British, American or Russian soldier fighting the Nazis. Excellent graphics, frenetic action and often truly frightening.

SUPPLIER www.cd-wow.com **DETAILS** www.callofduty.com **FULL REVIEW** March 2006



4. Gametrak: Real World Golf

£35 inc VAT ★★★★★



Strap on the gloves provided, and Real World Golf tracks your golf swing. It feels surprisingly realistic and sure beats playing with a joypad. This is one for all golf fans.

SUPPLIER www.amazon.co.uk **DETAILS** www.realworldgolf.com **FULL REVIEW** April 2006



5. Tycoon City: New York

£18 inc VAT ★★★★★



Build a property empire in the Big Apple. There are plenty of challenges to spice up gameplay, and the desire to make your businesses competitive means hours of fun.

SUPPLIER www.cd-wow.com **DETAILS** www.uk.atari.com **FULL REVIEW** April 2006





▲ Animal cruelty with guns, dynamite and fists in *Creature Conflict: The Clan Wars*

CENEGA Creature Conflict: The Clan Wars

★★★★★

£15 inc VAT

You can't fail to love the concept of *Creature Conflict*: groups of animals armed to the teeth fight each other on alien planets. The concept is well executed. The cartoon-like graphics are brilliantly drawn, with smooth character animation. There's just the right level of humour as well, thanks to the voice acting and the way creatures cower when you have them in your sights.

The levels are clever, too. Each one is an entire sphere that you can wander over. The curvature of the terrain means it's very difficult to hit someone on the other side of the world.

There's a brilliant array of weapons, including the usual favourites such as machine guns, sticks of dynamite and shotguns, and more bizarre elements such as berserk mode, where you do more damage with your fists.

The game is turn-based, so you get 30 seconds to move your character and make your attack, plus seven seconds to run away and hide. Once your go is over, it's your opponent's turn to strike back. Each round gives you control of a different character, moving through them in order.

In this respect, it's exactly the same type of game as *Worms*. *Creature Conflict*'s one advantage is that you have a choice of team to play, each with their own special abilities and weaknesses, so there's a lot more variation.

However, there's no escaping the fact that turn-based games can soon start to wear a bit thin, and after a few missions of playing against the computer you may lose interest. Still, there are multiplayer and online modes, so you can play one-off maps against fellow humans, which help extend the game's life span.

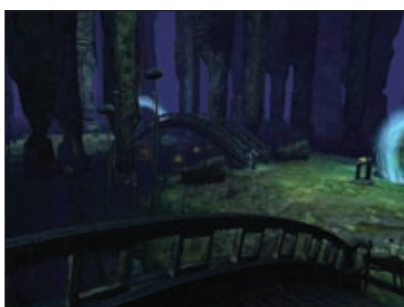
Creature Conflict is a well-executed and fun game to play, but if you own *Worms* or the original *Creature Conflict* there's nothing here that you won't have seen before.

David Ludlow

SUMMARY

- ✓ Quite funny
- ✓ Animals with guns
- ✗ Unoriginal

STRATEGY GAME Windows 2000/XP, 256MB RAM, 1.3GHz processor, 1GB disk space PRODUCT CODE 8595071015449 SUPPLIER www.cd-wow.com DETAILS www.cenega.com



▲ The fifth incarnation of *Myst* ties up the story, but there's nothing you haven't seen before

UBISOFT Myst V: End of Ages

★★★★★

£25 inc VAT

The original *Myst*'s main attraction was its lush pre-rendered graphics, which really gave Mac owners something to gloat about. Now in its fifth incarnation and ditching pre-rendered graphics for a 3D engine, a lot of this attraction has disappeared. In fact, the game doesn't look as impressive at all, especially when you compare it to the amazing graphics of new games such as *F.E.A.R.* and *Call of Duty 2*.

All that leaves us with are the puzzles, which haven't made any significant leaps forward since the original game. The biggest problem is that it isn't clear which objects can be interacted with and which are background decoration. This might be 'classic *Myst*' to some people, but we don't see the point of purposely making everything so difficult. For example, it took us ages to find the door handle to get us out of the first room.

Once you get used to how the game works (by clicking on everything in the vain hope you can use it), there's a lot on offer. The puzzles, as with previous versions, are tough and require logical thinking. As an added complication, some puzzles require you to enlist the help of other in-game characters. Throw in the four lands you travel between, and there's lots to accomplish and hours of gameplay to get through. The plot, which ties up the whole series of games, is an involving enough clichéd riff on the standard fantasy magical theme, although it will probably make more sense to people who have played all five games.

This is ultimately what *Myst V* is all about. If you're a fan of the original games, you'll be a fan of this one. If you've never picked up *Myst* before, however, there's nothing particularly new on offer to make you want to. It makes us wish LucasArts would start making point-and-click adventure games again, and show everyone how it's done properly.

David Ludlow

SUMMARY

- ✓ Difficult puzzles
- ✗ Annoying interface
- ✗ Nothing new

ADVENTURE GAME Windows 2000/XP, 800MHz Pentium processor, 256MB RAM, 4.5GB disk space PRODUCT CODE 0814247 SUPPLIER www.gameplay.co.uk DETAILS www.myst.com



▲ Enjoy a jolly old thrashing in your racing automobile with *TOCA Race Driver 3*

CODEMASTERS TOCA Race Driver 3

★★★★★

£27 inc VAT



TOCA Race Driver 3 is one of the most ambitious racing games ever. Most games pick a single genre, such as track racing or rally driving, but *TOCA* gives you all of them. There's a mix of time periods, so you can strap on some goggles and race against drivers from the 1930s.

There was concern that too much diversity would lead to each section being poor, but *TOCA*'s developers have done an excellent job. The graphics, ranging from Silverstone to a rally course in the hills of England, are spot on and cars look detailed and suffer realistic damage.

The controls strike a good balance between arcade game and simulation, although we'd recommend using a steering wheel or other analogue controller rather than a keyboard.

The game has several play modes, but before you can unlock them you need to do well in a championship. The World Tour is the best place to start, as this takes you through the game's full range of racing options. It starts off sedately enough with track racing at Brands Hatch, but soon throws in a rally, four-by-fours and, for the boy racers, American muscle cars.

Completing each section unlocks more play modes. This is where *TOCA* gets difficult, as you have to be a Jack of all trades to progress. If, like us, you're shoddy on the rally courses, you can find yourself frustratingly doing the same track time and time again to get to the next stage.

Alternatively, you can choose to enter a Pro Tournament with a single discipline, which lets you focus on the style of racing that you prefer.

There's a choice of standalone races, but to unlock all the modes you need to complete the championships. Still, once you've completed all the official races, there's lots to come back for.

With its detailed graphics and many racing modes, *TOCA Race Driver 3* is the ideal game for anyone who loves all forms of driving.

David Ludlow

SUMMARY

- ✓ Many racing modes
- ✓ Fast racing action
- ✗ Can get frustrating

RACING GAME Windows XP, 256MB RAM, 1.4GHz processor, 6GB disk space PRODUCT CODE B000A4324M SUPPLIER www.dvd.co.uk DETAILS www.codemasters.co.uk